

What is SEC?

The Surveys of Enacted Curriculum (SEC) is a research-based tool that collects, reports, and uses data on what content is taught and how it is taught in individual schools and districts in the areas of math, science, social studies, language arts and reading. In particular, the SEC provides analyses on the relative “alignment” between standards, curriculum, assessments and instruction. The SEC methodology uses surveys administered at the classroom and school levels which are either paper-based or Web-based. The SEC data analysis and reporting tools are intended to assist teachers, administrators, and policy makers with planning for instructional improvement.

The SEC Model

... has the capacity to provide analyses of the degree of alignment between standards, curriculum, assessments, instruction and whether, and to what degree, student achievement is being impacted.

... has the capacity to provide analyses of the differences in instruction and content across schools and classes.

... has the capacity to provide reliable formative data and information utilizing a “user-friendly,” visual presentation format to assist school leadership and improvement teams and staff in identifying staff development needs and possible improvement strategies.

... has the capacity to provide data on the success and impact of professional development initiatives in the areas of math, science and language arts/reading practices.

SEC and Alignment Assessment

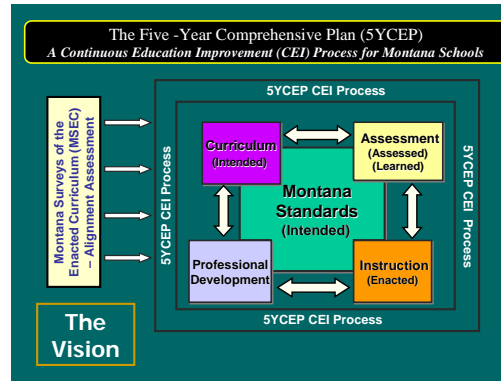


Figure 1 – Current Montana Continuous Education Improvement Process (CEI) with SEC

Figure 1 provides a graphic overview of the current CEI model being implemented by districts and schools around the state. This model is supported by the substantial research showing the necessity for a high degree of alignment between content and performance standards, district curriculum, assessment, instruction and staff development if student achievement is to be successfully impacted and improved over time.

Montana's Five-Year Comprehensive Education Plan (5YCEP) project has been the vehicle for initiating and sustaining the CEI model. The SEC provides a model for assessing the relative success of those alignment efforts.

“Schools must become learning organizations – they must think systemically – they must grow and evolve like other living systems.”
Peter Senge - 2003

Using the SEC Model

Teachers complete a survey on the curriculum content and instructional practices for one of their core classes. The survey items cover the time spent on the subject content areas; the levels of cognitive domain targeted; and the time allocated to the instructional practices used. Teachers also report on their educational preparation, professional development and school/class demographics and context. The survey usually takes one to two hours and can be completed in multiple settings. The survey data is aggregated and can be reported out by a variety of categories and subgroups. State standards and assessments for subject areas covered by the process are coded to allow for across the board comparisons.

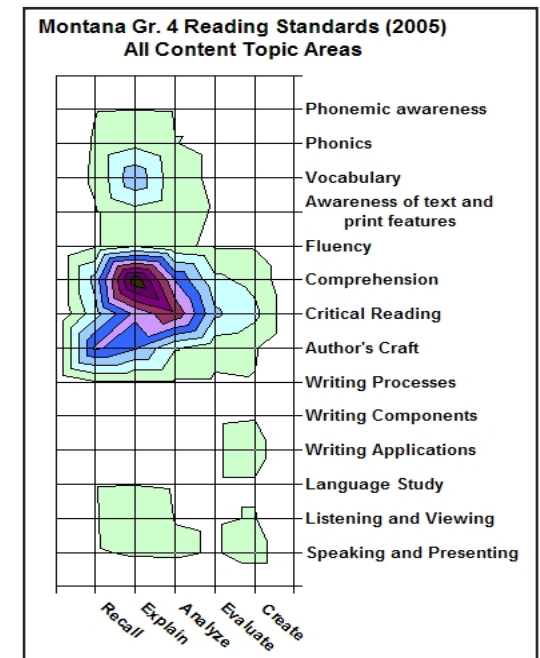


Figure 2 - Sample Content Map

In *Figure 2*, the color range indicates the amount of emphasis for each content area topic and cognitive domain with the darkest color being the area of most emphasis. Comparable maps can be generated for curriculum, state/district assessments and teacher instruction. There is a rich variety of “maps” and reports that can be generated with SEC depending on the targeted survey area: content alignment, assessment of professional development design and impact, types and use of various instructional practices and assessments, and teacher perceptions on several key components of instructional design and implementation.

SEC Development

The SEC project began in 1998 as a CCSSO collaborative working with eleven states and three urban school districts. States now involved include: Alabama, California, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

The model is research-based and has undergone extensive field testing. Other development partners include the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, TERC Regional Alliance, and Learning Point Associates (the parent organization for NCREL). The collaborative approach allows the development and implementation of SEC to be highly responsive to and cost effective for, member states and districts. More details can be found at the CCSSO Website:

www.ccsso.org/projects/Surveys_of_Enacted_Curriculum

Getting Started with SEC

The OPI is providing ESEA Title II Part A funds to support the development and training for the MSEC project. During the 2005-06 school year a variety of pilot projects using the SEC model were initiated across the state. Over 500 teachers from districts and consortia with schools ranging in size from small one room rural schools to large AA schools began to use this powerful new analysis tool. The number of districts and schools that are using the tool continues to grow.

Districts and/or consortia that would be interested in taking the next steps to learn more about the MSEC Project and the options for beginning to use the SEC tool should contact the OPI specialist listed below.

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MONTANA SURVEYS OF ENACTED CURRICULUM PROJECT (MSEC)

Providing reliable, comparable data to inform the continuous education improvement dialogue in schools and districts!



A Council of Chief State School Officers
(CCSSO) and Montana Office of Public
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Survey of Enacted Curriculum
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